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Ignatian Mysticism*

THE fragments of St Ignatius's Spiritual Diary, providentially saved from destruction, are incomparably precious as a revelation of his mystical life. About this mystical life, three questions are of special interest.

1. *Did God lead St Ignatius by the strictly contemplative way, i.e. the way of habitual infused contemplation?*

Infused contemplation is characterized by three psychological facts: the sense of God's presence, passivity and simplicity. But for one to be in the way of habitual infused contemplation, it is not enough that his life of prayer be marked with passing touches of infused contemplation. Then only is a soul in the contemplative way, when it habitually lives under the influence of mystical grace; when infused contemplation becomes its usual form of prayer.

A glance at St Ignatius's confidences and Spiritual Diary leaves no room for doubt that he was led by the way of habitual infused contemplation. The daily 7 hours of prayer at Manresa, the gift of tears, the abundant consolations, the numerous intellectual and imaginative visions on the Blessed Trinity, on the mode of creation, the Eucharist, Our Lord's humanity (20 or 40 times at Manresa), Our Lady, all these are so many arguments in favour of, not transitory mystical graces, but a frequent and protracted illuminating action of God, which went increasing from Manresa on to the end of his life.

No one better than St Ignatius himself can bear witness to his 'actuatio perpetua spiritus' (Nadal). To Laynez he said, "He had the grace of celestial consolation and visitation so ready to hand that he would say, if he wanted to find God supernaturally

* Condensed by J.-P. le Jeune, S.J., from Joseph de Guibert, "Mystique Ignatiennne", REVUE D'ASCETIQUE ET DE MYSTIQUE, 1938, pp. 3-22 and 113-140.

ten or more times a day, he could, by God's favour, do it easily." And to Ribadeneira, "He could not live without consolation, that is, without perceiving in himself something which was not his, which could not even be his, but which came altogether from God alone."

As for "el tiempo de la distracción de los estudios" in Paris, it should be understood as a time when visions and other favours were rare; Ignatius himself had curbed them; and they should be carefully distinguished from his mystical life as such; the deeper undercurrent of direct affective contact with God was unaffected by the lessening of these favours.

2. What are the characteristic features of St Ignatius's contemplation?

First, with regard to its object, St Ignatius's contemplation is clearly Trinitarian and Eucharistic. The Blessed Trinity is at the centre of his life. Our Lord, Our Lady, the Saints do not manifest themselves to Ignatius, except in connection with the Blessed Trinity, as intercessors and mediators. Numerous are the lights he received on the Blessed Trinity. He 'senses' and 'sees' the Persons, together or individually, their operations, processions and circumcession; at other times he only sees the Divine Essence without distinction of Persons.

Ignatius's mystical life is Eucharistic, not in the sense that he received a special abundance of lights on this mystery, but in the sense that all favours—Trinitarian graces included—are connected with the Eucharist: with the Mass and its various parts, from the preparation to the thanksgiving. And the graces received during the day appear as an extension or complement of the morning favours.

As for the nature of St Ignatius's mystical graces, the dominant feature,—and we can call it the orientation of his mystical life,—is "the dedicated love of a servant, the care to discern in its least nuances the desired service and to accomplish it, whatever it may cost, in a joyful élan of love, with a humble respect, a deep sense of the greatness and holiness of God, of the grievousness of the least failing: in a word, a mysticism of service and religion, steeped altogether in love". "The service of His Divine Majesty" is the core of Ignatian mysticism. And it is striking to see how completely the gratuitous favours which were granted to our Founder agreed with the main lines of his asceticism, or more exactly, . . . how faithful Ignatius's ascetical teaching was to the directions he received from God in his contemplation. His mysticism and asceticism alike are turned towards action. "In his Diary as well as in the Exercises, we notice the same dominant care to find and embrace the will of God, . . . the same desire for a divine confirmation of the decisions he has taken; we find the same devotion to the most Holy Trinity and the same deference for the Divine Majesty, the same sense of the infinite distance between God and us together with the most ardent effusions of

love; we find that the same large share is given to the mediators, . . . that the same subordinated but beneficent and useful rôle is played by the imagination and sensibility . . . ; in both Diary and Exercises we find an attentive and penetrating introspection, but no introversion that withdraws from daily life in order to be lost in the contemplation of God present in the soul."

3. To what extent do these features look like or unlike the traditional scheme of mystical life as shown in the experiences of St Teresa and St John of the Cross?

Mystics are commonly divided by the theologians of mysticism into three classes: the seraphic, the cherubic and the angelic mystics. Seraphic souls are those whose *will* is mostly affected by God's action. The cherubic mystics are more directly influenced in their *intellect*. As for the angelic mystics, it is the memory, the imagination, the *faculties of the concrete* that are more particularly subjected to God's influence.

Because the intellectual or cherubic forms of infused contemplation are more easily discernible, it is according to these that theologians have built the classical schemes of contemplative life. Now St Ignatius is to be placed among the angelic mystics. It is therefore not surprising that a good many discrepancies will be found between Ignatian mysticism and the classical pattern of mysticism.

The first point to be noted is that for St Ignatius service of God is not a consequence of mystical life, as it is for speculative mystics; it is its very object. There is no marked predominance in Ignatius's interior life, of either the graces of light or the graces of love; both of these are ordained towards action.

A remarkable feature—but not surprising in a mysticism that is oriented more towards service than union—is the complete absence of the 'nuptial aspect' of the mystical union. No trace with Ignatius, of spiritual marriage or transforming union. Nor does one find in the Diary any mention of an ecstasy properly so called, that is, a suspension of the sense powers.

Ignatian mysticism could be summed up as "a mysticism of loving service of God after Christ's example".

Purity of Heart through frequent Communion

" . . . Among the many and great graces which a soul obtains by receiving her Creator and Lord, there is first and foremost that she is not left for long, nor deeply encumbered, in sin, even in very light sins,—though no sin should be called light, since they all offend the sovereign, infinite Goodness. For when such a soul falls, He immediately makes her rise up, with greater strength and a firmer resolve to serve her Creator and Lord. . . "

To Fr. Borgia, end of 1545 (*Mon. Ign.* I, 1, 341)

The Spiritual Diary of St Ignatius

1. Most of us are aware that among the extant writings of our holy Father there is a fragment of his private diary, but few have an adequate idea of the contents of this document. One reason is that it has hardly been translated from the Spanish—or rather, that it hardly *can* be translated: for, the style of it, far from being literary, is not even grammatical; the very concern of our Father for expressing himself exactly, to his own satisfaction, makes some of his phrases (not to speak of abbreviations and signs) all but unintelligible, even in the original.

After all, the diary was meant for no other eyes than his own, and was destined for the fire—from which a kind Providence rescued the fragment beginning with February 1544 and covering little more than one year. Its simple, unaffected statements are obviously more ‘subjective’ than, say, the Spiritual Exercises which, although they too represent a record of Ignatius’s experiences (as he testified to Fr Gonzalez shortly before his death), are severely impersonal.

2. Yet, in another sense, the Diary is not altogether subjective: for, it is not so much concerned with the activity of the writer as with God’s action upon him. As such, it is a marvellous revelation of St Ignatius’s interior life and of the graces, the highly mystical graces, that ruled it. It throws a most welcome light on what is called ‘Ignatian Spirituality’, and helps in the solution of some objections brought up against it.

For instance, it has been said that the Exercises take little or no account of the workings of grace, that they are a mechanical system that expects to achieve its aim by the rigidly methodical use of our human faculties. And all the time the 15th annotation lays it down that the Director must suffer God to act immediately upon His creature: How sincerely Ignatius meant this is abundantly testified to by the very first pages of the Saint’s extant spiritual notes.

* * *

It is not possible to give here more than a mere taste of what awaits those who will peruse the Diary, as it is found in *Monumenta Ignatiana*, 3, I, p. 86¹. A few passages have been translated as best they could be, and reproduced in chronological order. Such interpolations as were deemed necessary are clearly marked by brackets.

1. We recommend a previous perusal of the introductory study, p. XCV, and particularly of para. 2: *De monumenti natura*.—A rather complete translation has been recently published in Flemish: *Geestelijk Dagboek* (Drukkerij-Uitgeverij Lannoo, Tielt). Partial translations into French have appeared in Pinard de la Boullaye’s *Saint Ignace de Loyola Directeur d’âmes* (Paris, Aubier) and in *Christus*, April 1954.

[Feb. 8, 1544] After notable devotion at prayer, and tears from the preparation for Mass, and during it likewise abundance of devotion and tears and voice held: remaining as I could with the intention of not [accepting] anything [by way of income for our churches]. Soon after Mass, with devotion and not without tears, going over the elections for an hour-and-a-half or more, and putting before me what seemed best according to reasons and according to greater movement of the will, namely: not to have any income; wanting to offer this to the Father through the intercession and prayers of the Mother and of the Son; and first praying to Her that She should help me with Her Son and the Father, and then praying to the Son that He should help me with the Father together with His Mother, I felt in me a going or being carried before the Father, and in this approach a raising of my hair, and movement with notable ardour in the whole body and, as a result of this, tears and vehement devotion**². Reading this later, and judging it well written, a new access of elevation not without tears**; later, recalling these graces received, fresh devotion.

In the evening for an hour-and-a-half or more, going likewise through the elections, and making choice of not having anything: finding myself at peace without any contrary movement to have anything, and losing the desire of proceeding in the elections, as I had thought to do some days before.

[Feb. 9th] Going through the elections with much peace and devotion, in every way it seemed good to me to have neither part nor the whole [of any income], nor there to be any just cause to consider the matter [further], holding it for settled, and with much peace of mind, and thus I was always left with [the idea of] not having anything.

So does Ignatius apply for himself his rules for election. But in spite of what he says above, the matter is protracted over a full month more, because he is conscious of God still working upon his soul and it is not for him to set a term to the divine action. The very decision he has arrived at, and of which in the meantime he makes an oblation according to the Exercises, he considers not so much as something he is doing for God but as a great favour the divine Majesty is granting to the Society, by associating it so closely with the poverty of His Son and His disciples.

[Feb. 11th] During the customary prayer, without elections, in offering, or in beseeching God that the oblation made should be accepted by His divine Majesty, with much devotion and tears; and then a little while later, while making a colloquy with the holy Spirit in order to say His Mass, with the same

2. Here, and subsequently as will be indicated by “ ** ”, we find a mark that, according to the editors, signifies a vision.—In a matter as eminently practical, and of secondary importance, as the question of an income for the churches of the Society, Ignatius decides, not by trusting to his own judgement, but by having earnest recourse to God through the triple colloquy, so often recommended in the Exercises, and by suffering God to illumine his mind.

devotion and tears; it seemed to me that I saw or sensed Him in a dense clarity or in the colour of a fiery flame, in an unaccustomed way: with all this I was confirmed in the election made**.

Then (I went) to consider and go through the elections and decide, and I took up the reasons that I had noted, to go through them: praying our Lady and then the Son and the Father that He should give me His Spirit³ in order to consider and decide—although I spoke as of a thing that was settled, experiencing much devotion and certain enlightenments with some sort of clear sight—I sat down viewing, as if in general, the acceptance of full, partial, or no [income] at all; and I lost the desire of finding any new reasons: and with this there came other enlightenments, namely, How the Son first sent the apostles to preach in poverty, and then the Holy Ghost confirmed them giving them His spirit and tongues, and so the Father and the Son, sending the Holy Spirit, confirmed their mission. At this there coming upon me greater devotion and complete disinclination to consider the matter any further, weeping and sobbing I made the oblation of not [having] any [income] to the Father, on my knees and with so many tears running down my face, and sobs, in making the oblation and subsequently, hardly being able to rise because of sobs and tears at the devotion and grace that I received. At last I got up, and being risen the devotion still stayed with me, as also the sobs, these welling up at my having made the oblation of not having anything, at holding it for settled, firm, etc. . . .

Here follow two short paragraphs, wherein he recounts further devotion upon recalling the past, and an experience of the Holy Spirit without the other divine Persons.

Later, in the chapel, before Mass and during it, abundance of devotion and of tears. Then great peace and security of soul, as of a tired man relaxing very restfully and [an inclination] not to seek or want to seek anything, holding the matter for finished, unless it was to give thanks and because of devotion towards the Father and the Mass of the Trinity, as I had previously thought of saying it on Tuesday morning.

We need not comment on the contrast which this self-portrait of Ignatius presents to the picture usually drawn of him. Notice, however, that he is earnestly concerned about small details of his co-operation with grace: Once, at prayer, he finds himself with a heavy head, "so much that, not daring to rise in order to say Mass without having had more sleep", he turns in again. On another occasion he blames himself severely for an interruption:

[Feb. 13th] Realizing that I had greatly failed by neglecting the divine Persons at the time of thanksgiving yesterday⁴, and wanting to abstain from saying the Mass of the Trinity which I had intended saying, and to take as intercessors the Mother and

3. The Holy Spirit is far from ignored by Ignatius,—though He is "missing" in the Triple Colloquy, where one is directed to call only on our Mediators before God.

4. He had left his prayer to impose silence to some disturbers of the peace.

the Son that I might be pardoned and restored to my first grace, abstaining also from the divine Persons by not approaching Them immediately for the original graces and oblations nor even saying Their Masses for the whole week, thus doing penance: I came to very great devotion and many very intense tears, both at prayer and whilst dressing, and with sobs; and feeling the Mother and the Son to be interceding, I experienced full confidence that the eternal Father would restore me to my former [state]. Then before, during, and after, Mass: much increased devotion and very abundant tears, seeing and sensing the mediators with great confidence of obtaining the request. And at all these times, both on Wednesday and on Thursday, holding for settled the oblation made and nothing against it.

Throughout, we see how deeply penetrated Ignatius was with the sense of the mediatorial office, not of our Lord only, but also of His blessed Mother. Towards the end of February there is frequent mention of Jesus, with reference to the special relations the Society and Ignatius himself have with Him. Some sentences are 'boxed', i.e. framed by a line drawn around them: this, in accord with the purpose of the whole Diary, is to help him keep in mind the grateful remembrance of the ideas thus marked and regarding which he had received special light. As for instance:

... and it seemed to me that it was in some way due to the Most Holy Trinity that Jesus showed or manifested Himself, there coming to my mind the time that the Father placed me with the Son⁵...

Then, as often as I remembered or had in mind Jesus, a certain sensing or seeing, with the understanding in continual devotion and confirmation [of my resolution].

At these times there was in me such love, sense or sight of Jesus, that it seemed to me that henceforth nothing could happen able to separate me from Him or make me doubt about the graces or confirmation received.

... and during the prayers to the Father it seemed to me that Jesus was presenting them, or accompanying those I was saying, before the Father, with a sensing or seeing which cannot at all be explained.

(To be continued)

R. CORREIA-AFONSO

5. In the famous vision at La Storta.

"... The more we shall have occasion, if it can be without sin of the neighbour, to put on the livery of Christ our Lord, that is, disgrace, false testimony, or any other form of reviling, the more we shall make progress in the Spirit, gathering greater and greater spiritual treasure, such as our souls desire..."

To King John III of Portugal, 15 March 1545 (*Mon. Ign.* I, 1, 298)

The Personal Magnetism of St Ignatius

MANY great writers pay tribute to the personal magnetism of St Ignatius. Of him Cardinal Newman wrote, "He was a princely patriarch, the St George of the modern world with his chivalrous lance run through his writhing foe." Of that magnetism Lionel Johnson pens these forceful words: "Ignatius was a fighter, a captain, a general of men, dauntless. It was hardly a Franciscan sweetness that won to him his followers who, from the famous six at Montmartre, grew so swiftly into a great band; it was not even the witness of his intense devotion and self-denial. It was his unequalled tenacity of purpose; it was his will and his method." The Catholic Encyclopaedia, under the article 'Ignatius', has: "He was ardent yet restrained, fearless, resolute, simple, prudent, strong and loving." Paulsen writes of his most unforgettable character, "His character suggests the silent yet inflexible activity of the forces of nature without feet or fury, without flurry or haste, moving quietly step by step."

Sedgwick observed, "There is no other record of such genius for statesmanship in the Roman Catholic Church since Hildebrand or Innocent III, and if they had wider vision or a more intellectual outlook, I doubt if they had greater tenacity of purpose or a deeper insight into human nature." Father Gonsalvez de Cammera, a man close to Ignatius in his later years, tells of our holy Founder's power to attract men: "Whenever I went in on business —and that was very often—, his countenance was transfigured so that I stood still in amazement." Our present Pope, Pius XII, says of Ignatius, "His character stands out in vivid contrast against cowardly retreat into the safe and secure havens of secondary and non-essential projects, the refuge of those who would shirk what is difficult and what, by reason of its greater worth, necessarily entails greater sacrifice."

Layne, Borgia, Xavier were all tremendous leaders of men, towering high above even big men of their times: yet Jerome Nadal comments that, though Xavier was as a giant amongst us, in the presence of Ignatius he was as little as a child.

This quality of leadership, this do-unto-death devotion which he inspired in even great men, they say, was due to the fact that he had a clear idea of what he wanted, where he was going, and how he was going to get there. His clear idea was "The end should determine the selection of the means, not the means be blindly exalted into an end". The end was 'the greater glory of God'¹.

1. This quality of Ignatius, which helped so much for his leadership, is admirably brought out in a little book published under the pseudonym Rix S.J... Most of what follows is taken from that book.

There are two directing principles of human conduct — reason and habit. Ignatius was ever careful that the latter did not strangle the former, and that a means be not blindly maintained by sheer force of custom if found counter to God's greater glory. At first sight, there does not seem to be much out of the common in such an attitude: but Ignatius made it part of his every thought. It was a maxim which his strong will had seized upon, and with which his whole personality grew identified. It was the moral principle that controlled, and gave unity to, his life and work: by it he ruled himself and endeavoured to rule others. To the neglect of this rule he attributed whatever he found amiss in his own soul, or in the organization of the religious society of his times.

That principle is already embodied in the Exercises: the end to be striven after is the Greater Glory of God, and all undue idolatrous worship of means is to be purged away: seek the end without the intrusion of any sort of bias towards any means in particular. His own first extravagant, onesided interpretations and uses of the divine graces and impulses were one after another corrected or laid aside in the light of the supreme criterion of the End. So, when he wanted to extend God's Kingdom throughout the exterior world, his zeal guided and controlled itself by the same criterion of 'means for the end'.

This is flagrant in the Constitutions which he wrote. They sit tight with regard to all non-essentials. Their governing principle is unqualified adaptability under the sovereignty of the end over the means. At first he wanted to write no detailed rules or constitutions, lest, as elsewhere, the supreme Rule be forgotten in the worship of subordinate and adjvant rules. Be it so, he would write, and at once paradoxes would appear in the written constitutions and in his living way of governing: combinations of contemplative and active life, of grace and nature, of idealism and practical sense, of individualism and solidarity among the members, of all-pervading authority and live individualism. But all the oppositions were 'resolved' in the supremacy of the Law of keeping the End in view.

* * *

His daring innovations in the adoption or discard of traditional means, rules, precedents, privileges, which he found were clogging the wheels of apostolic action, won him and his followers many enemies. It had always been the habit, the immemorial custom for religious to have a distinctive form of dress, to sing the Office in choir, to observe extra fasts, to have Rules binding under sin; it was a tradition to shun the new learning and flee from the world... Ignatius had the impudence to drop all those characteristics and still claim the name of religious? It was preposterous, unscrupulous, unprincipled, hypocritical! — But Ignatius refused to rate them as essentials of the End, judged them, in consultation with God, to obstruct the prosecution of the End,

and would therefore relinquish them as ineffective 'means',—let the whole ecclesiastical crowd protest and oppose as it wished.

That characteristic feature of the Society we must faithfully preserve. Shortcomings of the Society should never be due to obstinate adherence to 'means'. It is not adaptability that is dangerous for our Society, there is no peril in putting the End before the means: the reverse is true. We shall be wanting in the measure that we fail to apply the principle of flexibility of our Founder: no kind of *means* is *the End*.

A test soon came: Oviedo and Humphrey wanted to have seven hours a day of prayer. Although ill at the time, Ignatius almost rose from his sickbed to remonstrate: "I know what my conscience bids me", he told Borgia, "and I firmly believe without a shadow of doubt, and solemnly declare before the judgement-seat of Christ, our Master and Creator who will one day judge us for eternity, that these religious are straying from the right path, that they are deceived and mistaken . . ."

Our holy Founder has left upon the Society a deep impress of his magnetic personality. Let us draw near around Him during this Ignatian Year and pledge fidelity to his spirit.

T. DOWNING, S.J.

Notes on the Spiritual Exercises

A. The Strategy of the Spiritual Exercises (ctd.)

(5) The Other Aspect: the Part of God

The exposition of the strategy of the Spiritual Exercises given so far would be altogether misleading if we stopped at the human, psychological aspect described therein: For, behind all those tactics there is another, a higher-ranking Strategist, whose direction is paramount, whose intervention is constantly expected and hoped for.

True, the more one studies the Exercises, the more one is forced to admire the psychological insight, the logic, prudence, ingenuity, etc., of their author. But the fact is that, though he insists on the use of every means he can devise to make the soul play its part rightly,—when it comes to obtaining the fruit proper of the retreat, St Ignatius no longer puts any reliance on those human means: he relies on God alone. The advice he gives, the thoughts he proposes, the whole strategy which we have described, have no further purpose than to bring the soul of the exercitant in direct contact with God, to "fit the soul to approach, and be united with, its Creator and Lord". For "the more closely it is

united with Him, the more it disposes itself to receive graces and gifts from the infinite goodness of its God" [20].

In the Ignatian Exercises the retreat-master, too, plays an essential rôle; yet there is a moment when even his rôle comes to an end, viz. when the soul has found what it seeks: contact with God. "While one is engaged in the Spiritual Exercises, it is more suitable and much better that the Creator and Lord in person communicate Himself to the devout soul in quest of the divine will, that He inflame it with love of Himself, and dispose it for the way in which it could better serve God in the future. Therefore, the director of the Exercises, as a balance at equilibrium, without leading to one side or the other, should permit the Creator to deal directly with the creature, and the creature directly with his Creator and Lord." [15]

As a matter of fact, St Ignatius firmly holds that, if the Exercises are done properly, the exercitant is bound to feel the action of God on his soul, as well as the influence of the evil spirit. So much so that, if he were "not affected by any spiritual experiences such as consolations and desolations" and were "not troubled by different spirits", it would be a bad sign and the retreat-master would have "to ply him with questions about the exercises" [6]. Hence, one of the most important tasks of the one who is giving the Exercises is to help the exercitant understand the different movements produced in his soul and recognize those that are good, to admit them; and those that are bad, to reject them: recognize, in other words, the communications of God and the expressions of His holy Will.

Speaking, therefore, of the strategy of the Exercises, one must distinguish in it two elements: one human, the other divine; one the efforts of man, the other the direct communication of God. In the order of Providence, man must do all that is in his power to enable himself to know and follow the call of God (hence, the examinations of conscience, meditations, contemplations, etc.): ultimately, however, he must not rely on those human means but solely on God, who in His goodness will make His Will known to the soul that is faithful. The important point will be, How to recognize the authentic voice of God?

The "Rules for the Discernment of Spirits" are given for that purpose. They constitute an integral, a most important part of the Spiritual Exercises.

B. The Principle and Foundation

1. A young priest preparing his first "octiduum" would be well advised to write out the Points for the Foundation only after he has done those of all the other meditations. It is not easy to give Points on the Foundation and experience shows that, if one starts with it, one is sure to waste an amount of time.

Obviously, one cannot prepare an Ignatian Retreat unless one has, from the outset, a clear and accurate idea of the meaning

and rôle of the Foundation. But it goes with the Foundation as with the Preface of a book: it is easier and better to write it only when the book is finished. After all, the Foundation does not belong to the first draft of the Spiritual Exercises: St Ignatius appears to have written it only at Alcala or Paris¹.

2. In the Principle and Foundation St Ignatius proposes and demonstrates the fundamental principle which ought to regulate the life of man. And all he asks of the exercitant at this stage is that he give it his intellectual assent. Fr J. Rickaby's sailor boy, who spent this meditation stamping up and down his room saying, "d— it, it's true, it's true", was rightly told that he had made just the meditation St Ignatius wanted².

3. One could hardly imagine a drier, terser, more matter-of-fact enunciation of Ignatius's deep spiritual experiences than the first words of the Foundation. Everyone of those words carried with it the recollection of some of his most sublime illuminations: the Principle expressed his whole soul, his most cherished ideal.

The notion of creation was irradiated by the great lights he had received at Manresa, when "to his great joy, God permitted him to understand how He had created the world". Again, a little later, when gazing at the deep waters of the Cardoner, "the eyes of his soul were opened, . . . his mind was enlightened on many subjects, spiritual and intellectual. So clear was his knowledge that from that day everything appeared to him in a new light." From that day, too, God the Creator became the centre of Ignatius's conception of the Divinity: 'our Creator and Lord' would be one of his most favourite expressions; Christ Himself he would repeatedly call, "our Creator and Lord Jesus Christ".

And, characteristically, the first reaction of Ignatius in the presence of his Creator and Lord is not so much the intimate consciousness of his own nothingness as "that highest form of admiration addressed only to God, because He absolutely surpasses all the limitations that creatures bring to their admiration"³ viz. adoration, which is the highest form of 'reverence': "Man is created to . . . reverence . . . God our Lord."

He is also created to "praise and serve" God. Why did St Ignatius define the end of man by the praise, reverence and service of God, and not f.i. by the knowledge and love of God, as our Catechism does? It is said that he inherited the formula from Peter Lombard, whose *Liber Sententiarum* he studied at Alcala, and from the theological tradition issuing from him. The same formula he found in The Imitation of Christ: "Vere tu es dignus omni servitio, omni honore et laude aeterna" (Book 3, ch. 10).

1. *Les étapes de la rédaction des Exercices*, par H. Pinard de la Boullaye, S.J., pp. 15, 28, . . .

2. J. Rickaby, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises*, pp. 19-20.

3. Daniélou, *The Salvation of the Nations*, ch. VII.

In the terminology of St Ignatius the words ‘praise’ and ‘service’ have a much wider connotation than ‘reverence’; the same wide connotation, in fact, as the term ‘glory’. These three words are indiscriminately used by him, together or separately to express the end of man in general in the Exercises, and the end of the Society of Jesus in particular. Only the points of view may be slightly different.

Ignatius’s whole conception of the religious and apostolic life is one of ‘service’ of His Divine Majesty. Those who wish to “distinguish themselves in the service of the Eternal King and the Lord of all” begin by acting “against their sensuality and carnal and worldly love” [97]. Even his own extraordinary mystical experiences, as testified by his Spiritual Diary, were always directed, not towards the fruition of God, but towards that highest form of service which has become the supreme ideal and purpose of the Society: the salvation and sanctification of souls “in the service of our Lord alone and of the Church, His Spouse” (Form. Inst., n. 1). And this ‘service for the praise and glory of God’ is identically the praise and glory of God: “finem illum intuendo gloriae et laudis Dei Creatoris ac Domini nostri, quem nobis praefiximus” (Prael. Const., A.).

4. And yet, whatever associations and experiences may be connected with the first words of the Foundation, there is no doubt that, in the original meaning of the Exercises, the two premisses—the end of man and the end of other creatures—are the least important part of the Foundation: and there would be danger in insisting on them so much that they distract from the main conclusions which follow and with which Ignatius was mainly concerned. These conclusions are twofold:

(a) an immediate, logical, consequence: the rule on the right use of creatures. “Man is to make use of (creatures) in as far as they help him in the attainment of his end—(the Society is built on this capital principle, which condemns all faults of omission, sloth or negligence)—and he must rid himself of them in as far as they prove a hindrance to him.”

However, observance of this rule is morally and psychologically impossible unless one fosters an habitual disposition conformable to it. For, man acts according to his moral disposition. Hence,

(b) an inferential conclusion: the subjective attitude man ought to take up towards creatures, the attitude—incidentally—which St Ignatius aims at creating through the Exercises.

This attitude comprises two complementary elements: one, negative: “indifference”, i.e. detachment from creatures as considered in themselves; the other, positive: a determination to choose only those creatures that are more conducive to our end. In other words: attachment to God alone, the desire of His glory, and a determination to love nothing but in God. For, “Indifference

does not mean contempt of creatures, but freedom from them because the soul is taken up by the Sovereign Majesty of God.”⁴

5. There are several questions which it would be interesting to study in connection with the Foundation. For instance, How, beginning from the Foundation, the whole “Spiritual Exercises” are theocentric. The end of man is to praise, etc., God and “by this means to save his soul”. The emphasis is on praise, reverence and service. On 33 occasions the Exercises refer to the end of man, 22 times to speak only of the glory and service of God, 11 times to mention first the glory of God and then only the salvation of the soul.

But there are also questions in connection with the Principle and Foundation which should be avoided, f.i. Whether the rule on the use of creatures —“tantum quantum”— binds under pain of sin. Such a question is beside the point and distracts the attention from more important considerations. St Ignatius proposes what is logical and right, what *ought* to be done, whether under pain of sin or not. He takes the exercitant to a higher sphere, where the service of God is not considered from the mere moralists’ point of view.

6. It was clearly not the intention of St Ignatius to propose the Principle and Foundation as a meditation, still less to divide it up into several meditations. Had such been his intention, he would himself have proposed “points”, as he took the trouble to do, at the end of his manual, for all the Mysteries of the Life of Our Lord.

Which does not mean to say that it is wrong to propose one or more meditations on the Foundation. It is essential to the Exercises that they be adapted to the circumstances of the exercitant, and one such adaption may consist in meditating the Foundation, provided the retreat-master has thoroughly grasped its meaning and rôle. As a matter of fact, the author of these Notes considers as one of the best and most authentic Ignatian octidua he ever made one in which two full days were spent on the Foundation, with one meditation each — and only 15 minutes points — on the praise, reverence and service of God. But the retreat director was a unique master in the art.

On the other hand, one can see appreciable advantages in reducing the Foundation, in an octiduum, to a single instruction, followed by a private consideration. (One meditation might be added on the concluding sentence of the Foundation, the A.M.D.G.) Two advantages are that the attention can better be focussed on what is more important in the Foundation, and that more time is left for the major exercises of the retreat.

(To be continued)

J.-B. MOYERSON, S.J.

4. J. Daniélou, RAM, Janv.-Mars 1950, p. 83.

St Ignatius and India (3)

Ignatian Directives for the Missionary Apostolate

The Society in India, under the vigilant impulse of Ignatius's directives, grew steadily and rapidly in numbers and also in works. The task for which the first Jesuits were sent to India, as anywhere else in the world, was apostolic, according to the very formula of their Institute¹. And in regions as those of the East in the 6th century, that apostolate could not but be missionary. They accordingly looked to their General for direction in their labours among non-Christians and new Christians.

Yet, strangely perhaps, these directives are few and discreet, more often approval and encouragement of their initiatives than pre-fixed rules of policy and method. Ignatius's lead for the Jesuit apostolate in the East is in a way more indirect than direct. He follows up the labours of his sons with close and constant interest,² and when asked questions he answers, though perhaps not always as definitely as one would wish or expect³. But his chief direction consisted in giving them as immediate leader a man imbued with his spirit who, on the spot and in the concrete situations and before concrete problems, would take the decisions and work out the manner and method that express his own ideal. Xavier's direction and mission-method are Ignatius's. The apostle of the East worked out a manner of missionary apostolate that expressed the Ignatian directives even as it were *before* they were given or laid down in the Constitutions. True, Xavier himself at the outset of his mission implored St Ignatius to direct and guide him in his novel and daring enterprise, and later on repeatedly asked for direction, regretting to be far away from Ignatius and not being given a chance of obeying him⁴. But it remains a wonderful fact of history that, but for a few exceptions⁵, Ignatius could and did approve of the methods of apostolate devised by Xavier⁶.

1. *Formula Instituti* n. 3.

2. An example, letter of Polanco to Nic. Lancillotto, of November 22, 1547, DI I, 30, p. 206.

3. Cf. same letter, p. 308f "do what you think best", and below p. 60f.

4. Letter of March 18, 1541, EX I, 11, 6, p. 80f; further of July 26, 1541, Xavier asks how to recruit Jesuits in India, EX I, 7, 6, p. 49; he wishes to have Ignatius's directions in order to gain the merit of obedience, cf. letter of January 21, 1548, EX I, 60, p. 397; of January 29, 1552, EX II, 97, p. 287; of April 9, 1552, ib. p. 576. In a letter of January 12, 1549, he asked Ignatius for a spiritual testament, EX II, 70, 12, p. 13.

5. For example, in the question of Indian vocations to the Society, or his personal duty as Superior or Provincial of staying in India (cf. however even for this the following note).

6. One striking example of how Xavier fulfilled the letter of the Constitutions before they were written, is Const. VIII, 1, 1, "qui... ad regionem aliquam (cuiusmodi essent India vel alia provincia) missus esset, si pars eius aliqua peculiari limitatione ei assignata non fuerit, potest magis vel minus in hoc vel illo loco commorari, aut decurrere quacumque, omnibus perpensis (in se, quod ad voluntatem suam attinet, indifferentiam sentiendo)

Still, Ignatius was willing himself to direct the apostolate of the Jesuits in India, and did so, both as to its main orientations and as to the detail of certain particular problems submitted to him.

Main Orientations

The main orientations St Ignatius impressed on the Jesuit apostolate in the East are but the concrete and local application of the apostolic manner of the young Society, new and original in many respects at the time, but to us now hardly appearing a novelty.

Faculties and Spiritual Favours

A first item of frequent occurrence in the Ignatian documents for India, one which may strike us as unduly insisted upon because we take it for granted, but which was of considerable importance to the first Jesuits, is the obtention and communication of the faculties and spiritual favours for their apostolic ministry. St Ignatius, either on his own initiative or at the request of the Fathers, obtains for them and communicates with them the faculties, in a way unusual at the time, granted to the young Society; those, for example, of preaching, teaching, hearing confessions or administering the sacraments anywhere⁷, or the more special powers regarding reserved cases or dispensation from fast and abstinence or from marriage impediments or of the privileged altar⁸. So also the spiritual favour of the jubilee indulgence of 1550 extended to the East for the many who dwelled far from Rome⁹.

While communicating these faculties, Ignatius takes care to direct the Companions that they should use them only with the approval of the ecclesiastical authorities of the place where they work, even though they are not bound to obtain this authorization¹⁰. This is in conformity with his well-known solicitude to keep the good favour of local Ordinaries and to work in agreement with them. He himself did his share to foster these good relations with Bishop Albuquerque of Goa, by his letters to him of December 15, 1549, and again of February of 1552¹¹.

Close Contact between the Home-Base and the Field

A feature that has been pointed out as novel and characteristic of Ignatius's missionary method is the close contact he wishes et oratione facta, iudicaverit ad Dei gloriam magis expedire".— Ignatius must have had Xavier in mind when writing this.

7. Letter of July 7, 1545, DI III, App. 2, p. 875f.

8. Letter of Polanco of November 22, 1547, DI I, 90, p. 728f; of Ignatius of February 1, 1552, DI II, 70, p. 320f; of Polanco of July 26, 1554, DI III, 25, 6, p. 98.

9. Letter of July 7, 1550, DI II, 18, p. 43f; also Polanco of July 20, 1550, ib. 20, pp. 47, 49. Cf. about further spiritual favours, DI III, 14, 5, p. 42f; 20, 64, p. 60f; 25, 6, p. 68.

10. Cf. letter of December 18, 1545, DI III, App. 2, p. 876.

11. DI I, 90, pp. 727-29; DI II, 76, p. 324.

to be kept between the home-base and the workers in the field¹². We mentioned already before his insistence on, and ruling concerning, regular reports from every local Superior and frequent letter-writing. Besides the unity this meant between the so widely scattered members of the Society, it was also no less intended to keep him, and those responsible for the direction of the 'mission' in India, informed in detail about the circumstances, successes, obstacles, reverses in their work. Repeatedly he urges his information and directs Polanco to specify in detail what Superiors and Fathers should write about¹³. The long letters of Xavier or Lancillotto or Berze and others, sent to Ignatius or to the Society in Europe, are proof that this ruling bore fruit¹⁴. Their propaganda value for the recruitment of missionaries from Europe is another, not negligible, result of this contact between the home-base and the field.¹⁵ On the other hand, Ignatius's own letters to the Fathers in India, and his answers to their questions and problems, show that from Rome to India also the link was kept unbroken. On both sides they remained undeterred by the long, long delays in the mail system of the time, when it took regularly over a year and easily over two years and more before an answer to a letter from or to India could reach.

But written reports were not deemed sufficient. As early as November 20, 1547, Polanco is writing to India that a Father be sent to Portugal and Rome to report on the situation by word of mouth¹⁶. The request is repeated in letters both from and to Rome, till it materializes, as noted already, in the going to Rome of Fr A. Fernandes.

Another measure was still contemplated to tighten the contact between Rome and India, that of having in Rome a special procurator for Portugal and India. Polanco mentions it in a letter of October 20, 1554, and again of February 22, 1555¹⁷. It does not seem to have been effected during St Ignatius's lifetime.

Schools and Colleges

" Of a truth, as Your Reverence says, there is no better way

12. Cf. J. Granero, S.J., *La action missionera y los metodos missionales de san Ignacio de Loyola*, Burgos 1932; cf. *Revue d'Histoire des Missions* 1933, p. 306f.

13. Cf. Polanco to Gaspar Berze, August 13, 1553, DI III, 5, p. 15f; end of February 24, 1554, ibid. 19, 4, p. 63.

14. Not devoid of interest in itself, though less important for our present purpose is St Ignatius's ruling, well known and at times wrongly interpreted, that news which is communicable to and meant for outsiders, that is, of an edifying nature, and other news that is more private and about persons, at times less edifying, should be written in separate letters; cf. his instruction to Gasp. Berze, August 13, 1553, DI III, 5, 2, p. 16.

15. The description of this propaganda effect is given in EX I, 15*-18* "de summa epistolarum efficacia", and in DI I, 53*-55* "de effectibus epistolarum Indicarum in Europa".

16. DI I, 26, p. 191; again a letter of November 22, 1547, ib. 30, p. 206.

17. DI III, 25, 11, p. 99; 47, 5, p. 261.

for planting the faith in this country than to multiply similar colleges", Fr Nic. Lancillotto wrote to St Ignatius, January 11, 1551¹⁸. It was in his letter of October 11, 1549, that Ignatius had proposed, as one of the means to plant the Society in India, to increase the number of colleges¹⁹. Whether the initiative for taking up the work of the colleges and schools, not only for the sake of recruiting for the Society, but also for the education of externs, came from the Fathers in India or from St Ignatius, or perhaps even from outsiders, namely, in the case of the college in Goa from the founders of that college who asked and obtained Jesuits to undertake the work of education²⁰, the fact remains that Ignatius approved and encouraged the work of education of the youth in schools and colleges as one of the principal activities of his sons in India.

In this field, the Fathers in India were to some extent ahead of their brethren in Europe²¹. There the education of outsiders was slower in coming. In a letter of January 22, 1550, Lancillotto mentions four colleges: at Bassein, Goa, Cochin, and Quilon, that of Goa being by far the most important²². They were meant especially and in the first place for future Jesuits and future priests, and accepted both Portuguese and Indian boys. Did they also receive non-Christian boys with a view to conversion, or even just for the sake of their education? The first, possibly; the latter appears less likely, though this is perhaps not clear from the Ignatian documents we possess. The great work of the schools and colleges was intended mainly to train real Christians and future workers for the spread of the Faith.

The schools run by the Fathers were not only of the higher grades, where grammar and the classics, philosophy and theology were taught, as in Goa. There were also elementary schools, and these met with Ignatius's explicit approval. Polanco wrote in his name to the Vice-Provincial Mich. de Torres, November 21, 1555: the schools where children are taught to read and write, and also Christian doctrine, should be continued; though this work is not done now in Europe, yet it is not foreign to our Institute; and in India hardly anything better can be done²³.

Christian Doctrine

The teaching of Christian doctrine to the young and unedu-

18. DI II, 39, 5, p. 152; cf. before a letter of Lancillotto to Ignatius, November 1548, DI I, 52, 6, p. 344.

19. DI I, p. 154. The same wish of seeing the number of colleges grow is expressed in his letter to Lancillotto of January 27, 1552, DI II, 65, 7, p. 313.

20. Cf. Fr Wicki's preface to doc. 14, the constitutions of St Paul's college of Goa, in DI I, 14, pp. 111-14.

21. Cf. Wicki, ibid. DI I, 14, p. 112.

22. DI II, 8, 3, p. 15f.

23. DI III, 66, 11, p. 307.—An elementary school for poor boys was also attached to the college of Goa; in 1552 it counted some 300 boys; cf. DI II, 104, 26, p. 468.

inated, so emphatically commended in the formula of the Institute, found its chief master in India in the person of Xavier himself, who as early as 1542 composed his small catechism for the purpose.²⁴ We have abundant proof that his companions were no less solicitous about catechism teaching. On the Fishery Coast, for example, it is one of the important and regular features of the mission task²⁵. Ignatius's mind, expressed in the *Formula Instituti* for the whole Society, is clear with regard to the apostolate in India from his letters.

On December 26, 1553, he writes to Nic. Lancillotto at Quilon praising his work for the instruction of children in Christian doctrine, which gives hope, he says, that not only will they themselves grow up good Christians but also help many others to it by their example and word²⁶. We just mentioned his approval of elementary schools, for which one, if not the important, reason was the opportunity they offer for teaching catechism.

In this connection we should point to Ignatius's directive with regard to teaching catechism to catechumens, when apparently he advises a partial departure from Xavier's practice; it is better, he writes, January 27, 1552, that baptism be not given without previous instruction in the catechism²⁷.

Indianization

Did St Ignatius give any directives to the first Jesuits in India concerning adaptation and Indianization of the new Christian community? If we consider only the church buildings left by him or their successors, we might come to think that this point, so important in our eyes to-day, was rather badly overlooked. The Bom Jesus at Goa, for example, would not feel out of place in Rome or in a town of Portugal. But there is another, perhaps more important, part in adaptation, on which Ignatius insisted from the very start. He wanted the living Church and Society to be built up in India with indigenous vocations, both to the Society, as shown already, and to the priesthood. To foster these vocations was, in Ignatius's mind, one of the chief purposes of the colleges and schools. And by recruiting on the spot he meant not only from among the Portuguese and their children but also from among the sons of the Indian soil. For their promotion to the priesthood he no doubt demands serious preparation, yet with discretion: in the circumstances those may be ordained who have sufficient virtue and doctrine to exercise the priestly ministry in their country for the good of their own souls and of those of their neighbour²⁸.

One measure suggested or approved by Ignatius for training

24. Cf. EX I, pp. 106-16; and for its Tamil translation EX II, p. 381f.

25. Cf. Wicki DI I, 39*, II, 15*.

26. DI III, 16, 1, p. 48.

27. Letter to Nic. Lancillotto, DI II, 65, 2, p. 311.

28. Ibid. 10, p. 313f.

Indian boys thoroughly in view of future apostolic work, was to send some boys to Portugal or Rome; they would, after due formation, return to their homeland, and by the example of their life and doctrine be of a more universal utility²⁹. We have, however, no indications as to how far the suggestion materialized.

But priests, whether Indian or non-Indian, were few. Catechists taken from among the people, and close to them, were the necessary helpers of the priests. The Fathers themselves were not slow in finding this out and putting it into practice. St Ignatius is all for it, and gives the method of Fr Henriquez on this point, as reported to him by Lancillotto, his full approval³⁰. And he apparently also thinks of a sort of part-time catechists — or should we call them the Catholic actionists of the time? —, when he voices his expectation that the boys educated in our colleges will later prove valuable helpers for the conversion of non-Christians and the instruction of Christians³¹.

The Fathers themselves, meanwhile, did their part in the religious instruction of the people. And for that purpose the knowledge of the languages of the country is indispensable. To preach and teach through interpreters is a poor and little effective solution, as was borne out by experience. The Fathers, accordingly, take to Tamil, and Fr H. Henriquez even rules that they should communicate among themselves in Tamil³². This zeal for the study of the languages, so obvious a necessity, did not fail to meet with Ignatius's warm approval and encouragement³³.

Particular Problems

The above gleanings from Ignatius's letters to India show his directives regarding the main orientations he wishes to be followed in the apostolic work. Of his answers to particular problems, referred to him from India mainly because of Xavier's prolonged absences, we need give only one or other example. They are discreet, and not unfrequently rather indefinite.

To Nic. Lancillotto, who had asked about the manner of admitting boys in the college, about public prayers and processions, he answers through Polanco (letter of November 22, 1547) that he'll give a definitive rule when the Father who is to come to Rome will have reported on the situation³⁴. A more definite answer is obtained by the same Lancillotto to the question about relations between Christians and non-Christians: it does not seem expedient

29. Letters of Polanco to Lancillotto, November 20 and 22, 1547, DI I, 26, 6, p. 193; 30, 5, p. 208.

30. Letter of December 26, 1553, DI III, 16, 7, p. 49.

31. Letter of December 24, 1553, DI III, 14, 8, p. 44.

32. Letters of October 29, 1552 and January 12, 1551, DI II, 90, 6, p. 381; 40, 6, p. 158f.

33. Letter of December 26, 1553, DI III, 16, 6, p. 49.

34. DI I, 306, p. 208f.

allow and encourage these, lest occasion be given for greater
wil³⁵. The question of the separation of Portuguese and Indian
boys in the college of Goa Ignatius leaves to Lancillotto's good
judgement; on that of the admission of candidates to the Society
to the priesthood he commends circumspection³⁶. As to the
separation of our Scholastics from the college boys, "there are
pros and cons on both sides," he answers, "though all in all more
is to be said in favour of the separation; Xavier will finally judge
when he comes.³⁷" (Xavier was no longer among the living at
the time when this letter was written.)

Obviously, Ignatius expected much from the wisdom and
judgement of the Fathers. They themselves had to settle many
difficult practical problem. No wonder that in several letters to
Ignatius the Fathers in India insist on a judicious and careful
selection of missionaries for the East; they should be outstanding
no less in virtue and probity of life than in doctrine. Ignatius
took the request to heart: to help make the proper selection was
one of the reasons why he recalled Xavier to Europe³⁸.

Conclusion

These factual data of the directives sent by St Ignatius to
India will have convinced the reader of what we said above:
that Ignatius would only give main leads,—the forms of apostolate
peculiar to the pioneering new Religious Order that the Society
was. As to details, he would generally not prescribe them himself
but would refer the questioners to his *alter ego* on the spot,
Francis Xavier, of whose spirit's agreement with his own he was
most confidently certain. (And history shows that, on most
points, Xavier had in fact given beforehand example and direc-
tions perfectly conformable to the mind of Ignatius.)

What St Ignatius contributed directly to the practical
apostolate in India was the apostolic spirit he instilled in all the
Companions, and the Formula of his Institute (and, later, the
Constitutions) entirely devised for the spread of the Kingdom
of Christ. He could then safely leave a large degree of initiative
to Xavier and proportionately to other Superiors and even to
labourers on the spot. He trusted that the interior Law of
Charity would guide and illumine their practical judgement and
show them the ways and means they should adopt, with a pure
intention of the greater glory of God and the greater service
of souls.

P. DE LETTER, S.J.

35. DI II, 46, 2, p. 187.

36. Ibid. 4, p. 187.

37. Letter of July 26, 1554, DI III, 25, 4, p. 97.

38. DI III, 1, 5, p. 4.

A Self-Portrait (3)

SPLENDOR VERAE HUMILITATIS QUAE DEO ET
HOMINIBUS AMABILEM REDDAT

The radiance of true humility that will make him
acceptable to God and to men

I. The Nature of this Humility

What St Ignatius meant by TRUE humility and how he himself practised it appears clearly from the Spiritual Exercises which record not only his doctrine but his personal experience: they are his 'Memoriale'.

Humility is a many-sided virtue and possesses various degrees.

A. ITS FOUNDATION: Humility and Truth

Humility is founded on a twofold truth: (a) *Man's nothingness*: 'Man is created'. The Exercises begin by laying bare man's native nothingness before God's unbounded greatness. Conclusions follow immediately: total submission to God, deep reverence in His presence . . . (b) *Man's sinfulness*: this is the theme of the First Week, which leads us deep down into the abyss of our misery and invites us to enter each within himself and feel intensely "shame and confusion, because I see how many have been lost on account of a single mortal sin, and how many times I have deserved eternal damnation, because of the many grievous sins I have committed"; to "consider myself as a source of corruption and contagion"; to cry out in a flood of emotion and wonder at the long-suffering mercy of God that has permitted me to live.

B. ITS CROWN: Humility and Love

Thus far we have only a very incomplete and one-sided idea of Ignatian humility. "St Ignatius wishes to build high, and therefore begins by grounding us on the deep bedrock of humility. On this solid foundation will he build every other virtue. Yet, strange to say, though he builds, and builds high, he never leaves off work on the foundations".¹ Those who carry on with the Exercises after the First Week continue to seek humility, but *in a more exalted way*.

Following St Paul, Ignatius now dares lead sinful creatures to humility by pointing to the example of the Incarnate Son of God. An Angel could possibly become humble by understanding the nature and necessity of humility, but for us there is only one

1. From an essay on Humility in the Spiritual Exercises which we hope to publish in Ignatiana, and from which the main ideas here expressed are borrowed.

practical way, which is the attraction of the example and love of Christ. Humility is a matter of love, and St Ignatius intertwines humility and charity so closely that one loses all means and desire to separate them; in fact they seem to become synonymous. The rough way of humility has become the attractive way of love, the loving imitation of Our Lord and Eternal King. This is what Ignatius calls the third or supreme degree of humility, the "amorosa humilitas", the very height of Ignatian, nay of Christian, spirituality.

And thus we have the complete notion of Ignatian humility in the ancient definition of St Augustine: Love of God even to the contempt of self.

Its PRACTICE: Humility and Obedience

While leading us to the loftiest heights of the Third Degree of Humility, St Ignatius is ever careful to keep his feet firmly on the ground. Though he would have us beseech Our Lord for reproofs and contempt, he rules out "giving any occasion for them". He prefers a less spectacular but no less effective and meritorious way of practising humility, and that is obedience.

For an apostle, and very specially in the Society, the practical exercise of humility is found in obedience—"nunquam satis iudatum humilitatis exercitium" (Formula, n. 3). Obedience is humiliation, submission to God; a holocaust, perfect love and perfect humility.

II. The Fruits of this Humility

ACCEPTABLE TO GOD

(a) *God is Truth.* He loves truth, and counts falsehood, and consequently pride, an abomination: "He casts down the proud in the conceit of their hearts" (Lc. 1, 51).

Humility, which is nowadays despised by so many as the virtue of the weak, must yet be the most attractive of virtues, for it is the magnet that draws Almighty God. From the earliest ages this has been the keynote of those songs of the saints that tell why God has been so bountiful to them: "Because He has looked down on the lowliness of His handmaid".

(b) *In the humble the Father delights to recognize the image of His Divine Son.* Humility is an almost exclusively Christian virtue. No wonder that God, recognizing His Son in the humble soul, showers on it His choicest graces: "He hath exalted the humble".

St Ignatius was abundantly blessed with those graces because of his deep humility. Our first Fathers said that Francis Xavier was but a child in comparison with his holy Father: it was not without reason that Francis would write to him on his knees.

B. ACCEPTABLE TO MEN

(a) Humility is a most *powerful weapon* in the hands of an apostle. In the last analysis what men dislike in one another is our common heritage of arrogance, pretence, vanity, impatience, jealousy — the unholy progeny of pride and selfishness. Humility makes a clean sweep of them all.

Humility is *indispensable* in an apostle. "Blessed are the meek for they shall possess the land" (Mt. 5, 4). Meekness is inseparable from humility and together they make an irresistible combination; they conquer the hearts of men no less than the Heart of God. Did not Christ invite all men to come to him, drawn by the charm of His meekness and humility? One could say of humility what St Paul writes of charity — for have we not seen that the two meet at the summit? — "Humility is patient, is kind; humility feels no envy; humility is never perverse or proud, never insolent, does not claim its rights, cannot be provoked, does not brood over an injury; takes no pleasure in wrongdoing, but rejoices at the victory of truth; sustains, believes, hopes, endures, to the last." (cf. I Cor. 13, 4-7)

(b) St Ignatius knew the conquering might of humility. He himself had surrendered to the humility of Christ. One can see that in the Contemplations of the Infancy, in the Two Standards, where he presents Christ "in a lowly place, fair and gracious to behold"; above all, in the Three Degrees of Humility.

We too are sensitive to the attractions of humility: for instance, we love Our Lady not for her glory so much as for her simplicity and lowliness. Let us surrender ever more to this virtue, praying with our Father, "Give me loving humility".

Obstacles to Grace

"... As for myself, I am convinced that, both before and after the work of divine grace, I am all obstacle: and this fills me with contentment and gladness in the Lord, because in this way I cannot ascribe to myself anything that appears good. I even think . . . that there are few people in this life who can fully grasp how greatly they obstruct, or how little they foster, the work of the Lord in their souls. It is my deep conviction that, the more a person progresses in the practice and experience of humility and charity, the better he gets to realize how greatly even slight thoughts or things that may seem trifling, can be an obstacle and hindrance to grace. It is only in the next life that we will know our present shortcomings and faults . . ."

To Fr. Borgia, end of 1545 (*Mon. Ign.* I, 1, 340)

Cum permisso Superiorum
